

Application No. 09/813,209
Response to Office Action

Customer No. 01933

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

According to the present invention as recited in claim 1, a technical support server is provided which comprises: a service information portal section for providing web pages as information input and output interfaces; a knowledge base section for storing various claim reports and solutions which correspond to the claim reports and which are provided by an engineer who designs products in a product technology department; and a claim handling section for registering a new claim report, corresponding to a new claim, in the knowledge base section, and managing the registered new claim report as an unsolved claim requiring an answer from the engineer.

In addition, according to the present invention as recited in claim 1, the claim content of the new claim report is input via a client web page in a format substantially similar to natural language, and the claim handling section comprises a synonym table section for converting product unit information and problem information included in the claim content to standard terms, wherein the claim handling section: (i) produces the new claim report in a format including at least a claim title structured as a combination of predetermined items of definition information expressed in the standard terms, based on the claim

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content in the format substantially similar to natural language, by using the synonym table section, (ii) searches the knowledge base section for claims similar to the new claim report, and (iii) registers the new claim report in the knowledge base section when it is confirmed that no claims similar to the new claim report are present in the knowledge base section.

Still further, claims 17 and 23 recite a technical support system and a technical support method in which claim content is input and a new claim report is registered in a similar manner to claim 1.

With the structure of the present invention, the product unit and problem in new claim content is converted into standard terms, using a synonym table section, so as to obtain the title of a new claim report. Thus, input problem and product information is standardized, even though the content may be input in a format similar to natural language. Then, the knowledge base section is searched to look for content similar to the new claim report (which has a title in standard terms), and the new claim report is registered when it is confirmed that no claims similar to the new claim report are present in the knowledge base section.

It is respectfully submitted that USP 6,591,258 ("Stier et al") clearly does not disclose, teach or suggest the above described features of the claimed present invention. In fact, it

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is respectfully pointed out that Stier et al explicitly discloses that new claim content information is not standardized into standard terms.

As disclosed at column 13, lines 28-30 and column 13, lines 42-47 of Stier et al, to input a query either "picklists" or a free text entry field are used. It is respectfully pointed out, however, that the "Query User Screen 510" section of Stier et al relates to inputting claim content, not the "Knowledge Object Editor User Interface 26" section beginning at the middle of column 15, which has been cited by the Examiner.

In Stier et al, whether the query is input using the picklists or in more natural terms in the free text entry field 517, the input problem information is not then (after input) converted to standard terms using a synonym table section. Indeed, according to the teachings of Stier et al the very reason that the "synonyms" described therein are necessary is that input problem information is not converted to standard terms. Indeed, according to Stier et al, input problem information may be in different tenses or use different versions of words, or different ordering of words. For this reason, in addition to synonyms in the standard sense of words having the same meaning, the different tenses, versions of words or word order must be appended to records as synonyms so that the records are successfully retrieved when searches are performed based on the

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input problem information. See column 9, lines 51-65, for example. Based on this disclosure of Stier et al, for example, if a record includes the term "print," it should also include the terms "prints," "printing," and "printed." Otherwise, according to Stier et al, a search based on input problem information may not be successful.

Thus, according to Stier et al records should have synonyms added thereto. And since Stier et al discloses that records must include synonyms in order for searches based on input problems to be successful, it is inherent that Stier et al does not disclose converting input problem information into standard terms to obtain a claim report title for use in searching the database.

In summary, it is respectfully submitted that according to Stier et al, synonyms are appended to records, and input problem information is not converted into standard terms to obtain a claim report title. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Stier et al teaches away from the claimed present invention by suggesting that records should be revised to include multiple synonyms, instead of converting product unit and problem information into standard terms to obtain a claim report title in the manner of the present invention.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that Stier et al clearly does not disclose, teach or suggest a claim handling section that comprises a synonym table section for

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converting product unit information and problem information included in the claim content to standard terms, wherein the claim handling section: (i) produces the new claim report in a format including at least a claim title structured as a combination of predetermined items of definition information expressed in the standard terms, based on the claim content in the format substantially similar to natural language, by using the synonym table section, (ii) searches the knowledge base section for claims similar to the new claim report, and (iii) registers the new claim report in the knowledge base section when it is confirmed that no claims similar to the new claim report are present in the knowledge base section, as according to the present invention as recited in each of independent claims 1, 17 and 23.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 17 and 23, as well as each of claims 3-16, 19-22 and 25-28 respectively depending therefrom, all clearly patentably distinguish over Stier et al under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

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Allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

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If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,



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